

**DISSERTATION TEMPLATE
FOR SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE
REVIEW RESEARCH**



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MSc Public Health and
Social Care in Practice

**Put your title here – no more than
20 words maximum**

**Your Full Name and
Student Number**

Supervisor Name

Dissertation submitted as part of the requirements for the award of MSc Public
Health and Social Care in Practice

Month/Year

How to Structure Your Dissertation

The following is a **guide only** to help you write and structure your Dissertation.

Remember that each of these sections must start on a **NEW PAGE**.

The layout can look like this:

Section Name	Included in word count?	% of word count this section should be (roughly)
Declaration	NO	
TITLE PAGE	NO	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	NO	
ABSTRACT (aprox. 300 words)	NO	
TABLE OF CONTENTS	NO	
CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Background 1500 words approx.	YES	10% of word count.
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review 2000 words approx.	YES	15% of word count.
CHAPTER 3: Methodology 2000 words approx.	YES	15% of word count.
CHAPTER 4: Data Evaluation 3000 words approx.	YES	20% of word count.
CHAPTER 5: Data Analysis and Synthesis 3500 words approx	YES	25% of word count
CHAPTER 6: Discussion 2000 words		15% of word count
CHAPTER 7: Conclusion and Recommendations 1000 words approx.	YES	5% of word count.
REFERENCES Between 100-150 references needed. At least 50 journal articles used.	NO	
APPENDICES	NO	

DECLARATION

I, *[INSERT NAME]* declare that this dissertation has been composed by myself, that the work contained herein is entirely my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text, and that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification, in whole or in part, except as specified.

Signature:.....

Date:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Guidance: The acknowledgements section is a THANK YOU paragraph for everyone who has helped you whilst you have been researching and writing your dissertation.

This may be your supervisor or any other academic staff who have provided guidance and support; other students or colleagues that you've collaborated with; for example librarians; external bodies who have given you assistance.

ABSTRACT

Guidance: (300 words approx. – not included in the word count and is usually completed last)

The abstract is a summary of the **entire** dissertation. It should include:

- Brief **background/overall aim**.
- A synopsis of the **methods** used including:
- A brief mention of the subjects and material.
- A summary of the major **findings**.
- The **conclusion** based on the results.
- Keywords

The abstract must be structured using **(Background, Methods, Results, Conclusion)**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GUIDANCE - List the different sections of your dissertation with corresponding page numbers. The contents have been provided for you in this Dissertation Template. The words in this section do not count towards your word limit. This can be generated automatically. To update your page numbers, simply click on the word 'Contents' and select 'Update Table', this will update your page numbers.

Below is an **example** of how this needs to be presented based on your subheadings (**not included in the word count**)

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LIST OF TABLES

Guidance: This is required if you have used tables (e.g. graphs, image) in your text. This must list the tables in the same way as it appears in the body of your work. This can also be automatically generated just like the table of contents

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LIST OF FIGURES

Guidance: This is required if you have used figures (e.g. graphs, image) in your text. This must list the figures in the same way as it appears in the body of your work. This can also be automatically generated just like the table of contents

Figure 1: 10

Figure 2: 11

ABBREVIATIONS

Guidance: It should be added if lots of unfamiliar abbreviations are used in the body of your work. It must be presented in alphabetical order.

For example

AD: Alzheimer's Disease

ADL: Activity of Daily Living

AGECAT: Automated Geriatric Examination for Computer Assisted Taxonomy

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND (1500 words approx.)

1.1 Introduction to the topic – 200 words approx.

This is your introductory paragraph - introduce the research topic, provide definition of the components of your topic and states why it is a public health problem. That is

- Your topic, in context: what does your reader need to know to understand your topic area?
- Your focus and scope: what specific aspect of the topic will you address?
- The relevance of your research: how does your work fit into existing studies on your topic?

1.2 Background and Current Context –950 words approx.

- Provide some background information and put into context how your topic is situated within the current topic area).
- That is give the reader the impression that you have a good understanding of the research topic

1.3 Rationale for Research or Problem Statement - 150 words approx.

State why you have chosen your topic, what is the purpose of researching your topic area? how you have defined the boundaries and limitations of your work.

1.4 Research question –50 words approx.

You will include the updated research questions you have written in your proposal topic/ethics form here.

1.5 Research Aim - 20 words approx.

You will include the updated aim you have written in your proposal topic/ethics form here.

1.6 Research Objectives - 50 words approx.

You will include the updated objectives you have written in your proposal topic/ethics form here.

1.7 Chapter summary – 80 word approx.

You will provide a summary of the CHAPTER here and will also SIGNPOST to Chapter 2.

***Note – DO NOT assume your reader knows what you are talking about, be specific and explicit in your approach**.*

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review (2000 words approx.)

Guidance: Your literature review will focus upon academic and scholarly published works and materials e.g. Journal Articles in relation to your topic.

2.1 Introduction to Literature Review Chapter – 100 words approx.

Here you will provide an introduction to your literature review, you will outline what will be included in this chapter.

2.2 Literature review: is a survey of existing research on your topic. You need to develop a coherent structure and argument that leads to a clear basis or justification for your own approach– **1800 words approx.**

Describe how much research has been done into your topic, and what kinds.

- Search for relevant literature
- Summarise and Synthesize key findings from relevant studies.
- Critically evaluate sources: Assess the strengths and weaknesses of previous research.
- Highlight any gaps or limitations in existing research.

2.3 Chapter summary – 100 words approx.

You will provide a summary of the CHAPTER here and will also SIGNPOST to Chapter 3.

***Note: Themes/subheadings relevant to your topic must be identified and used to elaborate this chapter.*

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY (2000 words approx.)

3.1 - Introduction to Chapter– 100 words approx.

Provide an introduction to your methodology chapter. Outline what will be included in this chapter.

3.2 Systematic Literature Review (SLR) – 150 words approx.

Define/explain and highlight the steps to achieve a comprehensive SLR and state the purpose of SLR.

3.3 Search Strategy – 150 words approx.

Provide a definition of a search strategy within research. How was the comprehensive search achieved. The PICO/PEO framework must be explained in brief in relation to the chosen topic. Also specify the time/year limit that the search was conducted in the database.

3.4 Search terms – 400 words approx.

Provide a definition of a search terms and the importance/purpose within research. State why the use of synonyms is important in searching. Explain further the PICO/PEO framework used to achieve the search and how this was achieved.

Table 1: PICO/PEO Framework

Population/ Problem	
Intervention/ issue	
Context	
Outcome	

Based on the PICO/PEO framework state the search question and how the database search was conducted. State all the database search strategy that were used and the way the keywords synonyms were combined in the different databases using the relevant Boolean operators.

Search 1-P combine all the synonyms associated with it with Boolean operator “OR” and repeat the same for the remaining PICO/PEO framework component

3.5 Key Words - 65 words approx.

Define/Explain and state the importance of using keywords. Also state the main

keywords that were used to achieve your search.

3.6 Databases - 160 words approx.

How have you searched for information? What have you used to search for academic sources? State the importance of searching relevant databases. Justify why several databases is necessary to achieve a comprehensive search. That is use evidence to support/argue why several databases are necessary. Finally state the databases that were searched to retrieve relevant articles for the chosen research topic.

3.7 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria- 100 words approx.

Define/Explain and state the importance of inclusion/exclusion criteria with supporting evidence/citations.

3.7.1 Inclusion Criteria- 70 words approx.

State/highlight the inclusion criteria for your chosen topic

3.7.2 Exclusion Criteria- 70 words approx.

State/highlight the exclusion criteria for your chosen topic

3.8 Search Results- 350 words approx.

State the number of studies that were included in the review and how the elimination of irrelevant studies were achieved using the PRISMA chart to show a diagrammatic representation of the search results.

Figure 1: PRISMA flow chart/use the template

Insert the PRISMA flow chart to show how the elimination of articles was done.

3.9 Ethical Considerations- 100 words approx.

What are ethics in research? Have you considered ethics when choosing your literature? Explain how this was achieved bearing in mind that all the relevant studies must have gone through ethical approval before publication.

3.10 Chapter Summary- 100 words approx.

Summarise what was achieved in this chapter and highlight what the next chapter will cover (i.e., SIGNPOST to next chapter).

CHAPTER 4: DATA EXTRACTION AND EVALUATION (3000 words approx.)

4.1 Introduction to Chapter– 100 words approx.

Provide an introduction to your data evaluation chapter. Outline what will be included in this chapter.

4.2 Data Extraction– 120 words approx.

Write a brief definition of data extraction with citation then complete the rest based on the type of information you are going to extract for the characteristic table based on predesigned data extraction form.

4.3 Brief introduction to critical appraisal and paper quality assessment – 160 words approx.

Explain/Define critical appraisal and justify why it is importance to appraise research papers.

4.4 Critical Appraisal Tools – 200 words approx.

Explain/Define critical appraisal tool and state the importance of choosing the right critical appraisal tool to appraise research papers. Highlight what the critical appraisal tools are expected to appraise in papers.

4.5 Evaluation of Qualitative Studies using any appropriate tool –500 words approx. depending on the number of articles found.

Justify why you choose to use the critical appraisal tool for qualitative studies (e.g. CASP tool) if you use any. State the strength and limitation of your chosen appraisal tool when compared with other existing appraisal tool. Then appraise the relevant qualitative studies found for the review if any was found. Signpost to the appendix where the appraised studies tables are e.g. (see Appendix xxx).

Note: If no qualitative studies were found or not part of your inclusion criteria then ignore the section

4.6 Evaluation of Quantitative Studies using an appropriate tool – 1400 words approx. depending on the number of relevant studies found.

State the critical appraisal tool that was used for the relevant quantitative studies found if any was found and justify the importance of the tool. Signpost to the appendix where the appraised studies tables are e.g. (see Appendix xxx).

State the number of quantitative studies that were critically appraised with their citations. State what quantitative studies are used for and highlight the overall aim of all the chosen/relevant quantitative studies. Also, confirm if the methodology was appropriate for all the relevant quantitative studies that were found. State the study designs of each of the studies. E.g how many are cross-sectional and cohort study design. Continue the critical appraisal

4.7 Evaluation of Mixed Methods Studies using any appropriate – 400 words approx. depending on the number of relevant studies found.

State the critical appraisal tool that was used for the relevant mixed method studies found and justify the importance of the tool. Signpost to the appendix where the appraised studies tables are (see Appendix xxx). Then critically appraise the studies.

Note: If no mixed-method studies were found or not part of your inclusion criteria then ignore the section

4.8 Chapter Summary – 120 words approx.

Summarise what was achieved in this chapter. Highlight the appraisal tool that were discussed in the chapter to assess the quality of the studies. Then highlight what the next chapter will cover (i.e., SIGNPOST to next chapter).

CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS (3500 words approx.)

5.1 Introduction to Chapter– 100 words approx.

Provide an introduction to your data analysis chapter. Outline what will be included in this chapter.

5.2 Thematic Analysis – 70 words approx.

Explain what thematic analysis is and what it is normally used for and highlight what it is called when used to analyse/synthesise secondary data in SLR. Also, justify why it can be used for quantitative research.

5.3 Data analysis tool – 70 words approx.

Explain the chosen thematic analysis framework used for the analysis and synthesis of the relevant studies. This can be a thematic framework of Braun and Clarke (2006) or any other thematic analysis tool and this should be properly referenced. Explain what the framework does and the importance.

5.4 Characteristics of the identified studies- 160 words approx.

State the countries where each of the studies were conducted (e.g. Of the 28 studies, 7 studies were from China (Deng et al., 2014; Zhang and Jin, 2016; Li et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2021; Qi et al., 2022, Zheng et al., 2022a; Zheng et al., 2022b), 5 studies were from Iran (Jahromi et al., 2019; Vaezi et al., 2019; Akbari et al., 2020; Eslahi et al., 2021; Hajipoor et al., 2021). ***Signpost to the remaining Data extraction tables in Appendices.***

5.5 Emerging Themes from included studies (Analysis/Synthesis of included studies) - 3000 words approx.

For example: Analysis of the included studies identified the following overarching themes and sub-themes:

Highlight/identify the overarching ***themes and sub-themes*** that emerged during the analysis. Group your findings into themes; synthesise your findings. Interpret the findings. What patterns do they reveal? Do they shed new light on the subject?

Use a table to list all the themes and their sub-themes. Thereafter, all the identified themes and sub-themes need to be elaborated on and article (s) where they mirrored should be clearly mentioned in the text. Use the linking words to synthesis the findings of each of the studies under each theme (e.g similarly, likewise, on the contrary, correspondingly. See the example provided below for a guide on how to do this section.

For example

Table 1: Themes

Themes	Articles where it was extracted
--------	---------------------------------

Family support and Dementia (*example of a theme and how the identified studies needs to be elaborated/synthesised*)

All included studies in the review found a negative correlation between dementia and family support. This suggests that family support is a protective factor for dementia. However, there were some variations in a few studies (Chen et al., 2012; Jin et al., 2016; Yoruk et al., 2020; Huang et al., 2021; Zheng et al., 2022b). Huang et al. (2021) found that there was no significant association between dementia and family support after controlling for the mediation effect of family function.

5.6 Chapter Summary – 100 words approx.

Summarise what was achieved in this chapter.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION (2000 words approx.)

6.1 Introduction to Chapter– 100 words approx.

Provide an introduction to your discussion chapter. Outline what will be included in this chapter.

6.2 Discussion of Key findings – 1600 words approx.

Discussion of findings should be done in ***comparison with existing evidence*** in the subject area. I would advise that the discussion should be structured based on the identified themes in paragraphs.

- Critically analyse the findings by linking them to the background research. Are the findings consistent with existing research, theories, established practices? Do they present anything unusual?
- Present a critique of your research in terms of your approach, limitations etc. If research into your topic area is not well supported, consider reasons why this was the case (Cottrell, 2014, p192).

6.3 Strengths and Limitations- 200 words approx.

State the strengths and limitations of the SLR study

6.4 Chapter Summary – 100 words approx.

Summarise what was achieved in this chapter.

CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION (1000 words approx.)

7.1 Introduction to Chapter– 100 words approx.

Provide an introduction to your recommendation and conclusion chapter. Outline what will be included in this chapter.

Guidance: A very detailed recommendations for future practice/research is required in this chapter

7.2 implications of findings-160 words approx.

Identify possible implications of your findings for your area of study.

7.3 Recommendations for Practice -170 words approx.

7.4 Recommendations for Future Research-170 words approx.

7.5 Conclusion- 400 words approx.

State the overall conclusion of the study. No new information or arguments should appear in the conclusion.

GUIDANCE: When writing your conclusion, you can consider the steps below to help you get started:

- Restate your research topic.
- Restate the research question.
- Summarize the main findings.
- State the significance of results.
- Conclude your thoughts.

REMEMBER: You should NOT use any new information in the concluding chapter but simply make clear the main points, findings and outcomes of your work to date

REFERENCES (not included in the word count)

GUIDANCE: You should include: a list of references to key articles and texts discussed within your dissertation.

Ensure you select appropriate sources that are relevant to the dissertation topic

- UWTSD Harvard Referencing Convention

APPENDICES (not included in the word count)

GUIDANCE: All relevant information that do not fit into the main body of your dissertation but are useful information can be included in the appendices.

- Only include appendices that are referenced in the body of your work.
- In the body of your work refer to appendices with statements like “see Appendix 1.”
- No number is needed if it is just one appendix, otherwise, they should be numbered Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc. if more than one
- Label the appendix (Appendix 1:)

For example

- Data extraction tables
- Quality assessment/Evaluation of the relevant studies tables
- Search sheet, CASP data or documentation

DON'T FORGET THE BASICS ...

It is important to remember that the word limit is part of the task. You will lose marks if you go over or under 10% of your given 15000 words count for the dissertation.

- Page numbers should be located centrally at the bottom of the page.
- Main text should be divided into chapters beginning with an introductory chapter which sets the scene. Each chapter should begin on a separate page.
- It is a requirement that you submit your work in a word processed format.
- White, A4 paper in portrait format to be used. Seek guidance for illustrative material.
- Black word-processed print to be used. The font chosen for the main body of the finished work is Arial, point 11.
- Text should be at least 1½ line spacing (usually double-spaced) and one side of leaf only.
- Pages shall be numbered consecutively from the first page of the first chapter throughout the main text (including appendices) in Arabic numerals (i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.).
- The written work will first be submitted to Turnitin as an electronic submission

Submitting to the repository

On submission of your dissertation for marking onto Turnitin, you should also upload an additional PDF copy with the following form:

<https://purl.org/uwtsd-llr/masters-dissertations>

- a. The form requests the data required for inclusion in the university repository, and the necessary copyright clauses.
- b. You will need to sign in to your UWTSd account before completing the form to act as a digital signature verification.
- c. You will be asked to upload your dissertation, and provide a personal email address to allow LLR to follow up any queries.
- d. The form includes a reference to the language of the dissertation and the subject matter to assess repository eligibility.
- e. Dissertations that are not eligible for inclusion will be removed from the repository afterwards.